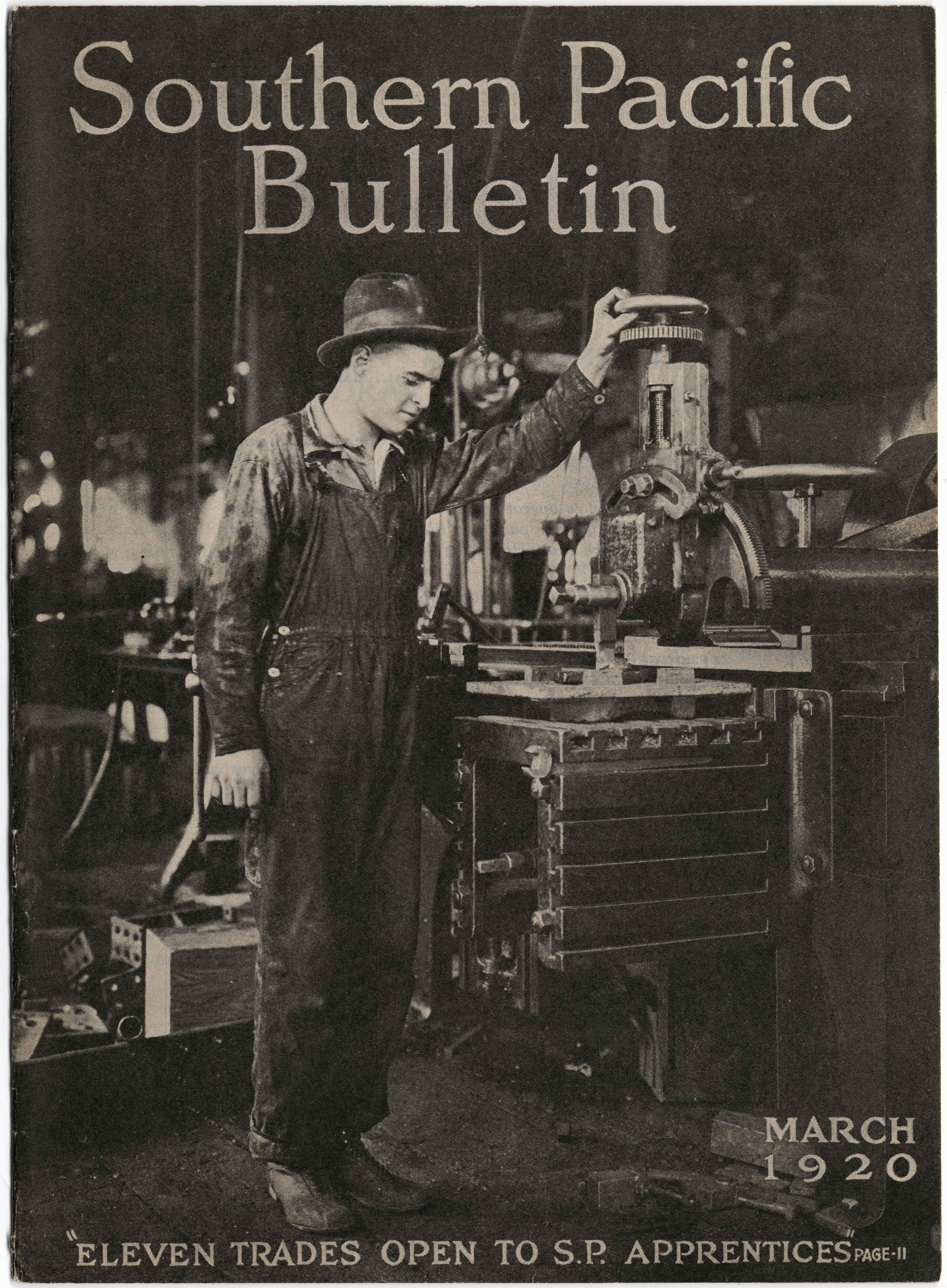
Southern Pacific Bulletin



MARCH 1920

"ELEVEN TRADES OPEN TO S.P. APPRENTICES" PAGE-11

REGIONAL REVIEW FOR 1919

Over Two Thousand Solid Trains of California Fruit Leave The State

The extent and importance of the California fruit industry may be realized somewhat by the fact that during 1919 solid trains to the number of 2202 moved eastward to the Missouri River and Chicago. There were 80,161 cars, an average of 38 cars per train.

These figures are contained in the annual report of Regional Director Hale Holden to the Director General, copies of which have been received by Federal Manager W. R. Scott.

Mr. Holden says in his report:

"The movement of traffic during the year has been generally free from serious interruption and well taken care of; although operations for the year were characterized by several features that caused congestion in certain localities, some of a serious aspect. During the six months following the armistice freight traffic offered for transportation was considerably less than for the corresponding months of the previous year, but during the fall months of 1919 the volume of business was again extraordinarily heavy.

"Rapid development of the oil industry in the Southwest and the heavy tonnage resulting, caused some congestion during the summer in that quarter. Following the shutdown of bituminous coal mines in southern Wyoming November 1, with adverse weather conditions and extremely heavy California traffic via the Sierra Nevada route, it was necessary to divert practically the entire California traffic to the southern gateway, which developed an accumulation along the southern transcontinental routes during November and into December. Extremely heavy loading in the South and Southwest, which prevailed during November and December, contributed to the congestion.

"Heavy deliveries of eastern coal through Chicago during November and the first part of December combined with heavy traffic in all other commodities and the fact that roads were largely dependent upon storage coal and miscellaneous coals, the use of which caused more or less engine trouble, resulted in slowing up materially the movement of traffic."

Car Supply Adequate.

Mr. Holden finds that the car supply, with the exception of grain box, was adequate, and that decreased loading can be attributed to the light traffic which prevailed during the early part of the year.

Reports from lines in this region show that during this year they have rerouted 77,669 cars, with a saving of 12,065,849 car miles, an average of 155 miles per car. Efforts have been directed to have as much of this rerouting as possible done at the point of origin, and reports show that 45,712 cars, or 58 per cent, have been rerouted at the point of origin, with a saving of 7,776,909 miles, or 64 per cent, an average of 170 miles per car. There are undoubtedly many cars turned to direct routes by shippers as result of these efforts of which we have no report.

Passenger Traffic.

Passenger travel has been heavy, particularly summer tourist and convention travel. For the nine months ending September 30, the passengers carried one mile were 9.3 per cent over the same period of 1918, and for the year the increase will be considerably more, as the influenza epidemic and other contributing conditions caused a curtailment of passenger travel during the latter part of 1918. For September alone the passengers carried one mile increased 26.3 per cent over the same month last year.

Financial Results.

During the ten months' period (results for November and December not yet being available) operating revenues of railroads in the Central Western Region increased 9.1 per cent. Operating expenses increased 14 per cent, resulting in a decrease of 4.4 per cent in net operating revenue. The increase in operating expenses was caused by further increases in wages and cost of material and supplies. Commencing directly after the armistice and continuing during the first half of 1919, there was a pronounced decline in business handled. The gross operating revenues would have increased much more than 9.1 per cent had the traffic been equal to that of 1918.

Net Federal income of the railroads in the Central Western Region for the ten months was $143,244,302. The ten months' proportion of the standard return for the roads in this region amounts to $158,669,127, so that for the first ten months of the year 90.3 per cent of the standard return was earned. During the first ten months of 1918 the net Federal income of the same roads was 101.2 per cent of the standard return. It should be noted here that the standard return was earned during the months of July, August, September and October.

Discussing maintenance of way work, Mr. Holden says:

"The railroads generally have been well maintained, and in some instances the shortage of a normal program in 1918 has been overcome in 1919, while in a few instances the apparent overexpenditures of 1918 have been overcome in 1919."

The report estimates a fuel saving for the year of approximately five millions of dollars, and the value of material reclaimed by all roads in this region, from January to September, 1919, inclusive, at approximately three millions.

From January to October of 1919, a reduction was effected of over 200 fatalities and over 2200 injuries as compared with the same months the previous year.

COAST DIVISION NEWS NOTES.

By H. R. HICKS
(Superintendent's Office, San Francisco)

A new commercial bank with a capitalization of $1,000,000, to be known as the Growers' National Bank, has been organized at San Jose.

Taking the Coast Division as a whole, real estate transactions are numerous and high prices are being realized. A great deal of orchard and ranch properties of over twenty-five acres are changing hands, one of the most notable being the L. Lion ranch of 5500 acres near San Martin which sold at $600,000. It is the intention of the purchasers to cut it up into small holdings.

The entire country adjoining the Coast Division is suffering severely because of lack of rain, there being a shortage of approximately eight inches thus far this season, compared with the normal rainfall, and if relief does not come soon livestock on ranges will suffer shortage of feed. Old wells are being sunk deeper due to the fact that a great many are running dry.

Early fruit trees, notably the almond and plum and apricots, are budding strongly and on the point of bursting into bloom. Prune trees are commencing to bud due to the recent warm weather. Should strong winds or stormy, cold weather ensue during March it will result disastrously to the fruit industry of the various counties through which the Coast Division runs.

PORTLAND DIVISION IS INSPECTED.

By T. J. WHELAN
(Brooklyn Shops)

February marked the Portland Division's restoration to Southern Pacific control and the jurisdiction of Federal Manager W. R. Scott. The division was given a thorough inspection by prominent officials of the company, including President William Sproule, Federal Manager W. R. Scott, Federal Auditor T. O. Edwards, Superintendent Mercier and General Passenger Agent John M. Scott. Departmental offices have been removed to the Yeon Building.

The mechanical condition of the division was inspected by Mr. George McCormick, general superintendent of motive power, and Mr. A. D. Williams, superintendent of motive power, Northern District. They were accompanied by Master Mechanic D. M. McLauchlan.